

# CANADIAN CERTIFIED GENETIC COUNSELLORS

**QUALIFIED AND COMPETENT  
GENETIC COUNSELLING  
SERVICE PROVIDERS**



Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors  
Association Canadienne des Conseillers en Génétique

**THE FUTURE OF GENETICS  
IN HEALTH CARE IS HERE.  
CERTIFIED GENETIC  
COUNSELLORS ARE SPECIALLY  
TRAINED TO PROVIDE AND  
OPTIMIZE GENETIC SERVICES.**



### **THE VALUE OF A CANADIAN CERTIFIED GENETIC COUNSELLOR (CCGC)**

The Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors (CAGC) Certification Board is committed to ensuring that members of the Canadian public are receiving genetic counselling services from health care professionals with a standard level of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgement. Genetic counsellors granted the credential CCGC (Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellor) and/or its French equivalent CGAC (Conseiller(ère) en génétique agréé(e) du Canada), have demonstrated these standard knowledge and practice competencies.

The genetic counselling profession is currently unregulated in Canada. As such, practitioners are not governed by provincial and territorial legislation ensuring safe, competent and ethical practice in the interest of public protection. National certification demonstrates competence of the genetic counsellor and a high level of commitment to the practice of genetic counselling in Canada. The national certification credential is an important basis for the evolution of professional legislation and regulation in Canada.





## WHO ARE GENETIC COUNSELLORS?

Genetic counsellors are non-physician health professionals with specialized training and experience in the areas of medical genetics and counselling. Genetic counsellors are valuable members of health care teams, working typically in a medical genetics clinic or other medical specialty areas, providing information and support to individuals and families who have, or are at risk for, genetic conditions. Increasingly, genetic counsellors are bringing their unique skills to health research, education, and public policy.

## WHAT IS THE TRAINING NEEDED TO BE A GENETIC COUNSELLOR?

GCs are typically Masters-level professionals who have successfully completed an accredited genetic counselling training program and have achieved, or are eligible to achieve, certification through either the CAGC or the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC), or have an equivalent combination of education and clinical genetic counseling experience.

## WHO PROVIDES GENETIC COUNSELLING CERTIFICATION?

Genetic counsellors voluntarily achieve certification through at least one of two national certification boards: the CAGC provides the Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellor (CCGC) designation and its French equivalent CGAC (Conseiller(ère) en génétique agréé(e) du Canada), while the ABGC provides the Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC) designation. In Canada, genetic counsellors practice with either or both certifications.

## UNIQUELY CANADIAN.

The Canadian certification reflects the Canadian context of genetics in health care. Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellors are entitled to use the credential CCGC (Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellor) and/or its French equivalent CGAC (Conseiller(ère) en génétique agréé(e) du Canada). The Core Competency documents and Code of Ethics developed by the CAGC, upon which the certification exam is based, are uniquely Canadian documents.





### COMPETENCIES DEMONSTRATED BY CANADIAN CERTIFIED GENETIC COUNSELLORS:

- *Knowledge Based Competencies* describe the basic knowledge expectations of genetic counsellors, and are updated to reflect the continuing evolution of the profession of genetic counselling and the rapidly expanding field of medical genetics.
- *Practice Based Competencies* describe the integrated skills, attitudes and judgement that genetic counsellors require to perform the services and duties that fall within the responsible, safe, effective, and ethical practice of the profession.

These Core Competencies serve as a platform for practice guidelines, training curricula, certification, continuing competency acquisition and maintenance, re-entry to practice and other quality assurance initiatives for genetic counsellors in Canada. The Knowledge and Practice Based Competencies documents are available for download from the CAGC website: <https://cagc-accg.ca>

### RECERTIFICATION ENSURES CONTINUED QUALITY.

To ensure continued competency, Canadian certified genetic counsellors need to re-certify every 10 years. Recertification credits are obtained from a combination of work experience and education credits from attending approved conferences.

### INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE CCGC/CGAC CREDENTIAL.

As of 2012, genetic counsellors with the credential CCGC and/or its French language equivalent CGAC are recognized as having the required expertise to supervise students in Genetic Counselling Master's training programs accredited by the American-based Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling. This decision represents an important step in the international recognition of the CCGC/CGAC credential.





**LOOK FOR THE CCGC –  
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DESIGNATION  
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